

A group of people in traditional Middle Eastern clothing, including men with turbans and women in headscarves, are gathered around a central figure. The central figure, an older man with a beard, is holding a white cloth-wrapped object, possibly a scroll or a small animal. He appears to be speaking or reacting to something. Other people are looking on with various expressions of surprise or concern.

Witnesses to the Savior: Simeon

Luke 2:21-35

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what in the
WORLD?



JANUARY 8

Pastoral Prayer Lottie Moon Exhibit

"Whom shall I send?" Isaiah 6:8
The Lottie Moon Exhibit







Bed Broom



Chopstick Container



Large Spoon

Shawl



Shawl



Below



Cartersville, Ga.,
July 10, 1871.
Rev. Dr. J. B. Taylor:
Dear Sir,

My
sister & I propose to unite
in the support of one of
Mrs. Crawford's Chinese
pupils. My sister, Miss
Eddie Moon, has been
in correspondence with
Mrs. Crawford, & she has
assigned to us Miss Lou
Yung. She says it will take
\$45.00 in gold yearly of
this. I propose to pay
one third, & my sister prom-
ises to pay one third. Total
seventeen (\$17.00) dollars on
greenbacks cover \$15.00 in
gold. I propose to send.

J. B. Taylor

July 10, 1871

Cartersville, Ga.,
July 10, 1871.
Rev. Dr. J. B. Taylor:
Dear Sir,

My
sister & I propose to unite
in the support of one of
Mrs. Crawford's Chinese
pupils. My sister, Miss
Eddie Moore, has been
in correspondence with
Mrs. Crawford, & she has
assigned to me Wun Koo's
fund. She says it will take
\$45.00 in gold yearly. Of
this I propose to pay
one third, & my sister prom-
ises to increase the rest. Will
seventeen (\$17.00) dollars in
greenbacks cover \$15.00 in
gold? I propose to send.

Cartersville, GA - July 10, 1871 - Rev. Dr. J.B.
Taylor,

Dear Sir, My sister and I propose to write in
the support of one of Mrs. Crawford's Chinese
pupils. My sister, Miss Eddie Moon, has been in
correspondence with Mrs. Crawford, and she
has assigned to us Wun Kiou Yun. She says it
will take \$45 in gold yearly. Of this I propose
to pay one third, and my sister promises to
procure the rest. Would \$17 in greenbacks
cover \$15 in gold I propose to send?



Witnesses to the Savior: Simeon

Luk 2:21-35

When Jesus began His earthly ministry, His teachings and His miracles were from God.

But when He
was an infant,

He did not speak

He performed
no miracles

Everything we know about Jesus when
he was an infant comes from others.

These are the
Witnesses to
the Savior:

- 1. Zachariah, John the Baptist's father, visited by an angel**
- 2. Mary, visited by an angel**
- 3. Joseph, visited by an angel**
- 4. Elizabeth, John the Baptist's mother, blessing Mary**
- 5. Mary again, singing a prophetic song of praise**
- 6. The Shepherds, visited by an angel**
- 7. Simeon, who saw the Messiah at the Temple**

Now, when a firstborn male was born, Jews in ancient days performed three very important ceremonies:

Ceremony 1 - Circumcision on the 8th day after his birth

The removal of the flesh made Jewish males distinct from non-Jewish males.

Heir of Abraham's promises

Indicates:

Separation

FROM the world

TO God

Separation = holiness

A Jewish male baby receives his name on this day

Name = character

When the eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus—the name given by the angel before he was conceived.

Luke 2:21 (CSB)

"Jesus"

= Heb. "Yeshua" (Joshua)

"Yahweh is salvation"

This little Jewish baby, circumcised on the 8th day and given the name "Yahweh is salvation," saves people from their sins.

The circumcision of Jesus is
a reminder of his humanity

There is an ancient heresy that says
that because Jesus is God, there is
no way he could become human.

"The spiritual cannot
become physical."

They say:

"Spiritual is good.
Physical is bad."

"Jesus was just a spirit. He
only APPEARED human."

But any teaching that
denies the humanity
of Christ is a heresy.

You don't want to miss
salvation because you
believe in a Jesus of
your own imagination.

Everyone loves to sing
Christmas carols, but
don't get your theology
from some of them.

If your view of Jesus becoming human includes the idea that he never cried, spoke King James' English, and that his glowing face lit up the manger as he practically levitated above his cradle, you believe in a heretical Jesus.

The real Jesus—our real Lord and Savior—was cut with a knife on the 8th day after His birth. And He bled. And He was forever changed physically.

"No crying He makes?" Not on Day 8!!
I'm fairly certain He cried. I think He
screamed.

He was HUMAN.

He IS human.

A Jesus that is not human
cannot be our Savior.

This human—this
Jesus—is our Savior.

Human sin
requires a
human death.

OUR sin requires
the punishment of
a human death.

The blood of bulls and
goats cannot pay the
penalty of human sin.

The blood of a spirit
cannot pay the penalty for
human sin—because
spirits don't have blood.

The only sacrifice that
can pay for your sins is
a human sacrifice.

Ceremony 2 - The birth of
a firstborn male requires a
price of redemption be
paid. What is THIS about?

Do you remember the
story of God sparing the
firstborn male of all the
Israelites during the final
plague in Egypt?

Well, as a way to commemorate that, God wanted all Jewish first-born sons to serve Him in the Tabernacle.

However, after Israel decided to worship a golden calf instead of God—not a good move—the first-born sons lost their status.

The Tribe of LEVI,
however, did NOT
participate in the sin
of the golden calf.

So they REPLACED the first-born sons as WORKERS IN the Tabernacle.

One of Levi's sons was Aaron, and HIS sons became the PRIESTS in the Tabernacle.

**"But what about all of the
first-born sons of Israel's
tribes that worshiped the
golden calf?"**

Exodus 32:35 says, "And he said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people. 36: Now therefore let me not see thy face, because thou hast brought this people out of Egypt to destroy them, to smite them, to scatter them among the nations; and to slay them under the iron sword. 37: Yet will I make of thee a great nation, and thou shalt be a blessing unto this people; and they shall be blessed upon thee. 38: And I will set my name above all the nations; and all the peoples shall know that I am the Lord their God." Exodus 32:35-38

Since they were replaced by the Levites, the father was obligated to REDEEM—or PURCHASE—the firstborn son from a priest.

They would perform a ceremony called "The Redemption of the Son."

"The Redemption of
the Son" doesn't begin
until the child is at
least 30 days old.

After that, a
wonderful
party is held:

Family and friends gather together.

Bread, meat, and wine is served.

Blessings are recited.



And the father gives the priest
five silver coins that looked like
the front and back of this coin.

Now, if a boy reaches the age of 13—adulthood—without being redeemed, he becomes responsible for his own redemption.

"But why would this ever happen?"

**"Why would faithful Jewish parents
NOT redeem their firstborn son?"**

Because five shekels
of silver amounted to
five months of pay for
an average worker.

In 2019, the average
person's salary in the
U.S. was \$31K.

Five month's salary
would be \$13K!!

I can tell you one thing: If
you're making \$31K per year,
you might not have \$13K
lying around the house.

It cost some serious CASH
to redeem your firstborn!

Ritual 3 - The birth of
a male meant that
the mother had to be
purified.



Why purified? Because she was unclean.

"Unclean? What
did she do
wrong?"

Right! Sin will
make you unclean,

"Giving birth to a
baby is a GOOD
thing, not a sin!"

"And Mary giving
birth to the Savior of
the world seems to be
a VERY good thing!"

but sometimes, even
without sinning, the
spiritual environment
you are in makes you
unclean.

There are certain spaces—
geographical places—that
are to be spiritual or
sacred or holy.

If God interacted with someone at a certain place—like with Moses at the burning bush—that place was made sacred by God's presence.

"Take off your shoes, Moses." Why?

Because something is holy: the GROUND.

And so back at the time of Jesus' birth, the Temple was a sacred space because God's presence was there.

And today, God the
Holy Spirit dwells
within each one of us
who believe in Christ.

YOUR BODY is a sacred space.

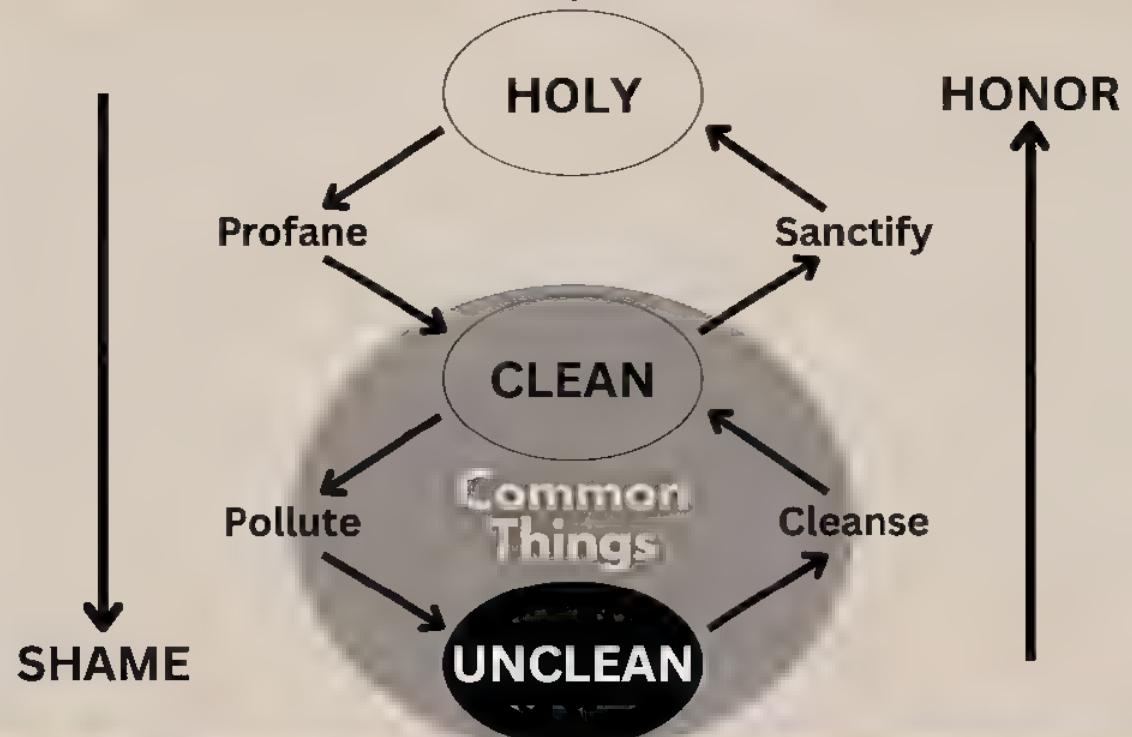
Your body is a space that has a
spiritual property or quality to it.

IF you are a believer in Christ,
your body is the Temple of God.

**And this is true not only of
you individually, but of all
believers COLLECTIVELY.**

**So when we gather together for
the purpose of worshiping God
and exercising the keys of God's
Kingdom, WE COLLECTIVELY
become a sacred space.**

"This is God's will: your sanctification"



According to the Bible, at any given time, a spiritual space falls within one of two categories: holy or common.

The word "holy" indicates separate/distinct.

When something is holy as unto the Lord, it is set apart for Him.

Common things are either clean or unclean.

And so, if a holy thing becomes profaned, it is no longer holy but common.

It may, in fact, become so polluted that it is unclean.

But if an unclean thing is cleansed, it can be considered to be clean.

And if that clean thing is sanctified/set apart for the Lord's use, it is no longer for common everyday use, but it is now holy.

By the way, there are a
lot of people today who
take what is holy and
profane it and pollute it.

Our worship of
the Lord
together is to
be a holy thing.

The activities we do—
the songs, the ministry
of the Word, the
prayers, the ordinances
—must be heartfelt and
true to His instructions.

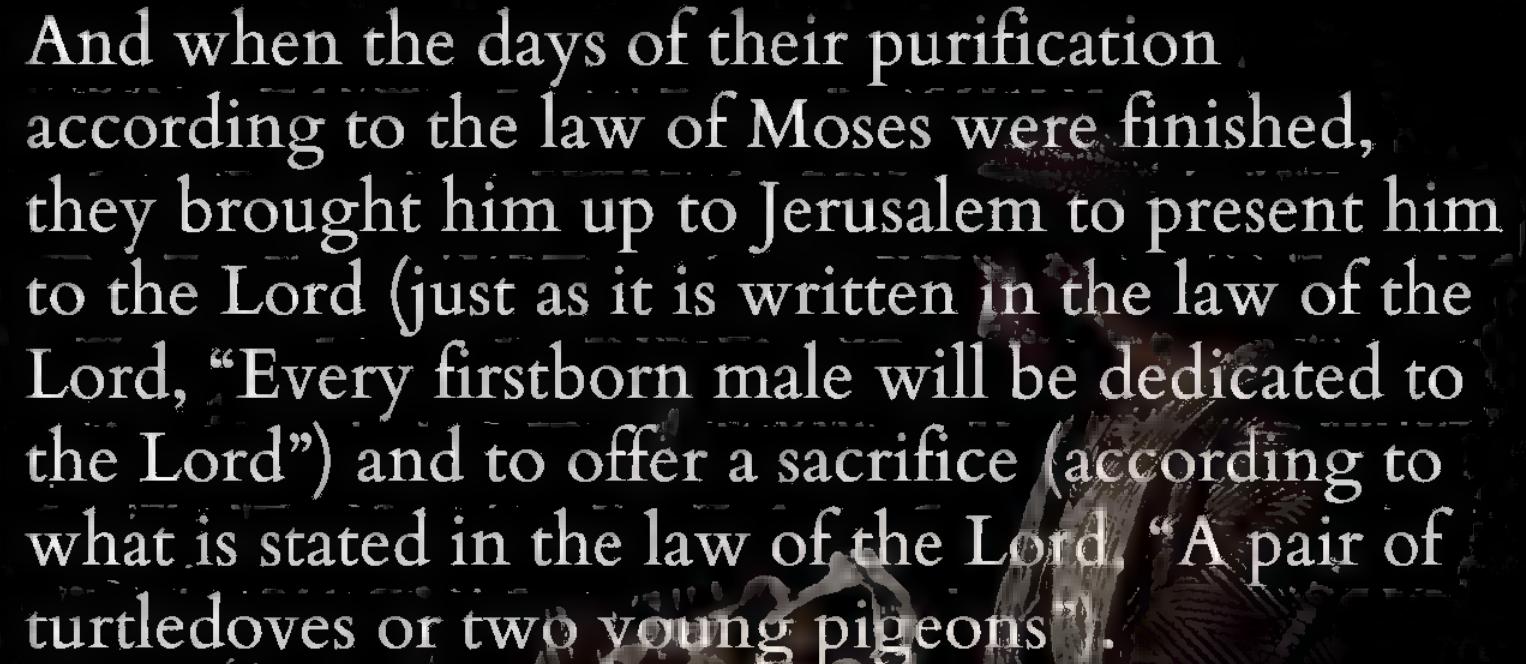
Our sexuality is to
be a holy thing.

If we profane it or
pollute it, we do so
to our own shame.

James 4:8 - Cleanse
your hands, sinners,
and purify your hearts,
you double-minded.

The Lord says,
"Be holy, as I
am holy."

By giving birth to a male child,
a Jewish woman at the time
was in an environment that
made her spiritually unclean.



And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were finished, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (just as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice (according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons”).

Luke 2:22-24 (CSB)

Mary was ceremonially
unclean for 7 days after
the birth of her son.

At the end of 7 days,
she received a symbolic
bath of purification.

Then, for the next 33 days, she was not allowed to touch anything holy.

This means that for 40 days total, she could not worship with God's people in the synagogue or Temple.

I think this also gave her some time of rest and recovery.

She also had a very important priority to care for.

After the 40 days were complete, she presented an offering and resumed her life and her worship.

She would either bring a lamb to the priest,

Or if she and her husband were poor, she would bring two turtledoves or young pigeons,

Which is what Joseph and Mary did

Simeon

There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel's consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him.

Luke 2:25 (CSB)

"This man was
righteous and devout."

Not a priest

Not a Temple worker

Just a righteous
and devout man

"looking forward to
Israel's consolation"

"consolation" implies
relief from suffering

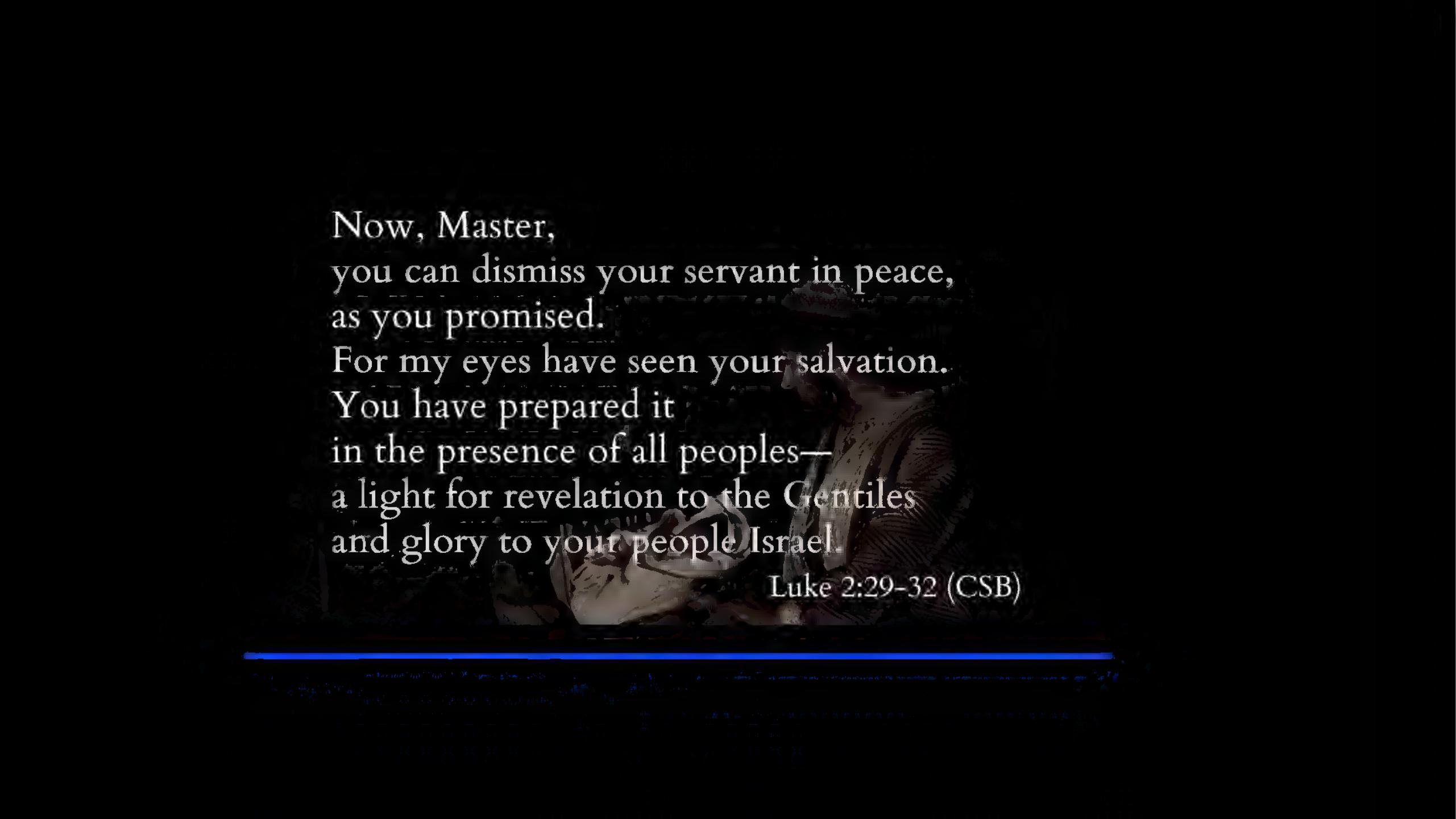
Israel's consolation
refers to the Messiah

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord's Messiah.

Luke 2:26 (CSB)

Guided by the Spirit, he entered the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said,

Luke 2:27-28 (CSB)



Now, Master,
you can dismiss your servant in peace,
as you promised.

For my eyes have seen your salvation.
You have prepared it
in the presence of all peoples—
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and glory to your people Israel.

Luke 2:29-32 (CSB)

The salvation that God offers is for all people.

Rom. 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.

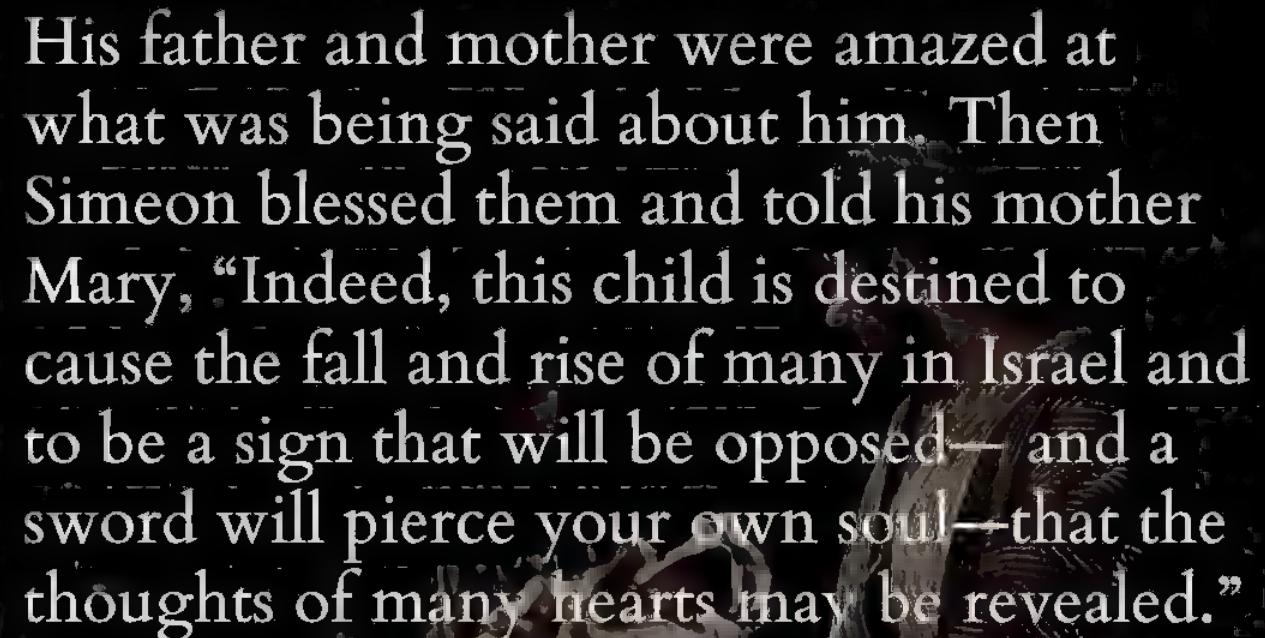
Jesus is "a light of revelation to the Gentiles" because the Law and Promises of God were given to Israel.

If we who are not Jewish are to be saved, the way of salvation must be revealed to us.

It HAS been revealed to us in Jesus.

Jesus is "glory to your people Israel" because Israel already had God's revelation, but they were waiting for the glory that God had promised.

Jesus IS the long-awaited glory of Israel.



His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and told his mother Mary, “Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed—and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Luke 2:33-35 (CSB)

Simeon blessed both Joseph and Mary, but his prophecy was only to Mary.

Why?

Joseph would die before Simeon's prophecy about Jesus' death would come to pass.

Simeon didn't know this,

But he was being led by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was "destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel"

"and to be a sign that will be opposed"

For the humble and believing, Jesus brings salvation

For the proud and unbelieving, Jesus brings judgment

Jesus will be opposed and rejected by many of the very people He came to save

"and a sword
will pierce your
own soul"

Mary would experience
incredible sorrow when
her Son would be
rejected and crucified.

"that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed"

You cannot be neutral about Jesus.

It's one or the other.

You either recognize Jesus as the Lord over all who died on the cross for your sins and rose from the grave,

Or you DON'T believe.

Where do YOU stand?

During our song of response, we invite everyone to come receive a Communion Cup from one of the silver trays on the tables, and return to your place to await further instructions. If you need assistance getting a Communion Cup, raise your hand and a Deacon will bring one to you.

If you would like Pastor David to pray with you, or if you have decided to follow the Lord in faith and baptism, you are invited to come speak with him during the song of response or after the service.

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was being betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-24 (LSB)

In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.

1 Corinthians 11:25-26 (LSB)

Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be arrogant or to set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth, but on God, who richly provides us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share, storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of what is truly life.

Philippians 4:6 (CSB)

Generosity Scripture / Closing